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Department of State POL 27-CAMB
TELEGRAM

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ENCISE

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ACTION EA-15

INFO OCT-01 EUR-20 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 CCO-00 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-07 L-04 NSAE-00 NSC-10 P-03
RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-20 IO-13 UPW-01 AID-28 RSR-01 /132 W
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O R 011130Z MAY 70
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 221
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
CINCPAC
AMCONSUL DANANG
USDEL FRANCE
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 6659

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT)

CINCPAC FOR POLAD:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY *Ambley* DATE *10/9/80*
PORTIONS DENIED AS INDICATED

SUBJ: PRELIMINARY VIETNAMESE REACTION TO US-SUPPORTED
GVN MILITARY ACTION IN CAMBODIA

REF: SAIGON 6635:

1. MOST VIETNAMESE POLITICAL LEADERS WE HAVE TALKED WITH TODAY
EXPRESS FIRM APPROVAL OF THE ATTACK ON VC/NVA SANCTUARIES ACROSS THE
BORDER IN CAMBODIA. THE DESTRUCTION OF ENEMY SUPPLIES AND
BASE CAMPS IS CITED AS HOLDING THE PROSPECT OF A DIRECT AND
FAVORABLE EFFECT ON THE COURSE OF EVENTS IN SOUTH VIETNAM,
AND MANY EXPRESS RELIEF THAT SUCH A STEP HAS FINALLY BEEN TAKEN.

2. THE ONLY EXCEPTIONS WE HAVE HEARD THE GENERALLY FAVORABLE
REACTION ARE MILD EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN THAT: (A) US PUBLIC
OPINION MIGHT NOT SUPPORT DECISION TO USE US TROOPS IN
CAMBODIA; (B) OPERATION MAY PROMPT VC/NVA TO FALL FURTHER:

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BACK INTO CAMBODIA AND PERHAPS TAKE PHNOM PENH; (C) CHINESE COMMUNISTS MIGHT SEIZE ON OPERATION AS PRETEXT TO SEND TROOPS INTO INDOCHINA; AND (D) USG AND GVN MAY BE VULNERABLE TO CHARGES THEY, TOO, "INVADED" CAMBODIA, UNLESS MOVE IS SHOWN TO BE IN RESPONSE TO AN APPEAL BY CAMBODIA.

3. AMONG SPECIFIC COMMENTS WE HAVE HEARD,

[REDACTED] HAS TOLD US THAT HE IS "PLEASED" WITH THE MOVE, BECAUSE HE SEES IT AS ONE WHICH HAS BECOME "NECESSARY." HIS GREATEST FEAR IS POSSIBLE ADVERSE REACTION OF PUBLIC OPINION IN US.

[REDACTED] EXPRESSED HIS PLEASURE THAT THE SANCTUARIES WERE BEING ATTACKED. HE WAS OPTIMISTIC THAT THE ATTACK WOULD RESULT IN SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCED MILITARY ACTIVITY IN SOUTH VIETNAM WITHIN THREE TO FOUR MONTHS.

[REDACTED] ALSO TOLD US HE "ACCEPTS" THE NECESSITY OF SENDING TROOPS ACROSS THE BORDER TO MEET THE PRESENT MILITARY SITUATION, ADDING SOMEWHAT AMBIGUOUSLY THAT PARTICIPATION OF US FORCES LIKELY TO PRODUCE WIDER REPERCUSSIONS.

4. VIETNAMESE LABOR LEADERS, WHOM EMBOFFS MET AT TRADITIONAL LABOR DAY RECEPTIONS, GENERALLY EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR THE OPERATION, WITH SEVERAL SUGGESTING THAT IT WAS LONG OVER-DUE.
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